



City of Tempe

MINUTES FOR NEIGHBORHOOD FOCUS GROUP MEETING

April 25, 2001
DS Conference Room

REPRESENTATIVES ATTENDING:

Dan Durrenberger: NW Tempe
Gretchen Reinhardt: Apache Blvd.
Jenny Lucier: NW Tempe
Kelly Matice: South Tempe
Vic Linoff: Downtown

Betty LaForce: South Tempe
Jim Lemmon: North Tempe
Johnny Basha: South Tempe
Patty Brenner: West Tempe, South Mountain
Roy Hoyt: NW Tempe

STAFF ATTENDING:

Ryan Levesque
Fred Brittingham
Scot Siegel, OTAK

Bonnie Richardson
Roger Millar, OTAK

1. INTRODUCTION

2. KEY ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED IN A REGULATORY UPDATE:

- Infill task was helpful in the product. It would allow a creative use and to think carefully. I have a problem with setback requirements. How much energy is used depends on the position of a building. You don't allow proper positioning you can lose a lot of energy.
- A disjoint exists between design and engineering concepts. Talking to a Phoenix Advisory Board member, his planning board was larger than Tempe itself.
- An applicant on the west side of Tempe had submitted for a unit addition. Historically on these lots, homes were built on every other lot. The individual who bought the property in R-2 zoning had to go through 9 variances for approval of a project that triggered non-conforming issues, as well as, originally single family to multi-family requirements like landscape islands, retention, etc.
- 11 variances for another multi-family development. He had bike requirements and \$60,000 in cost to underground utilities, which was avoided. In NW Tempe we have single family homes on multi-family property.
- Bd. Of Adjustment is the end of the road. It is not an advisory board. Any appeals on their decision go to Superior Court. Number of variances are posted and people would look at the project in opposition just because it seems like too much to ask for.

- We have a one size fits all mentality. Setbacks are good example of this. Now landlocked we are no longer in suburbia. We need to know what we want our city to be. If we want it to be like Manhattan and build up, we will make every property valuable.
- All the land in Tempe is redevelopable. It's not in stone.
- The City is about its people and its neighborhoods. "In conflict between residence and commerce, residence shall prevail"
- I am for neighborhoods that are functioning.
- Portions of neighborhoods that will be here for a long time will be suburban and another part will need urban redevelopment.
- Rio Salado Overlay has no plans for new scheme for development to come in. The Stables are a great place, but they have been zoned out. When we look at neighborhoods you just can't redevelop with standard requirements.
- There are 3 part of Tempe: South of the Freeway (Orange County), Freeway to the River (Downtown), and North of the River (Forgotten Tempe)
- We are unique (south Tempe). There happens to be a rise in crime, please don't take away any funds to improve police and other crime services.
- We are codified, we just caught up in codes instead of what works right.
- CPTED, they wouldn't be happy if we looked like the Moon.
- We need to address the needs in one code: Squeaky vs. a solid plan, working without having to fight so hard for and create a regulation process that is up to the applicant to defend. Transit tied to land use. How do we accommodate Historic Preservation. Churches in residential areas, they can go anywhere.
- You would like to think you could streamline, but the process, the number of hearings is discouraging enough.
- We lost a lot of our historic places already. We don't have a building code that relates to preservation. We'll give you historic preservation, but we won't let you build on the building. Look at great cities, why are they great, because their unique. A master planned community is not exciting.
- Important: Land use, Design Guidelines, Process; process is the most important
- Adding a room to a house shouldn't take as long as a new building.
- Government is always a lengthy process, going through a number of people.
- We need to empower the people that are in the process. Empower the staff so flexibility in creativity is allowed instead of following guidelines from a book.

- Land use guidelines are important in South Tempe. Large acre lots are used rebuilding bigger and more expensive properties. Standards or controls for better designs and higher quality and stringent standards. Plain out more quality.
- A lot of junk that is built these days actually meet requirements.
- Flexibility with creativity, is the biggest challenge. Wipeout zoning was a suggestion a while back, but how do you get assurance that its done right. Advocates of commercial business do not want to be surprised. We try at times to negotiate with development and use the code to our advantage as a strategy. We win some and lose some and win more often than not.
- My front porch to my homes design from an architect was a promise, but cut out in the end.
- Hayden Square project, was a failure. Centerpoint was the one that actually made it. Brownstone's historic home was supposed to be saved by the developer. Now its just a pile of bricks.
- "This is what we are trying to do, trust us, you'll like it", is the attitude.
- The process requirement is too much for public attendance. You could as a fulltime job, go to meetings for life. The demands of the process makes you drop your life.
- We get what we pay for with min. level performance. Pay the city employees more and you will get better quality.
- How do you really write something you want?
- I come from the developer mentality. My approach is different than most of you, but my main goal is to accommodate neighborhoods, because they are the customers. The things I get beat up on make sense and are for the betterment of the people and community. If you give staff more empowerment they can give the community more of what they want.
- I would like flexibility, but I'm afraid to trust that way.
- Communication of what is going on, letting everyone know is important.
- Not one of the Council is for "High Standards", Tempe is now compromising the ordinance on signage specifically when Tempe was worshipped for its great signage program.
- An adult business had come in when they zoned it to keep them out of neighborhoods and it got in on a technicality.